

A LETTER
First written and sent by Io.
FORBES, Pastour of the English
Church at *MIDDELBVRGH*, vnto certen
of the companie of Marchands Adventu-
rers at *STOADE*, at their earnest desire,
for resolving this Question :

**How a Christian man may discerne the
testimonic of Gods spirit, from the testimonie
of his owne spirit, in witnessing his Adoption.**

And now againe renewed and enlarged by
the Author, at the desire of divers good Christians, for
the comfort of their troubled cōsciences, and published
by those of his flocke, to whom he did dedicate
it for the publike vse of the Church.

Thy Rod and thy Staffe they comfort me, Psal. 23.4.



AT *MIDDELBVRGH*,
Printed by *Richard Schilders*, 1616.



the Author willeth increase
of all Spirituall blessing
in Christ.

To M^r Edw. Bennet, M^r.
John Turner, and M^r Ed. Kay,
the Author willeth increase
of all Spirituall blessing
in Christ.

RECEYVE (beloved
in the Lord) a cer-
ten Letter, which
above eight yecres
ago, I first did write
at the desire of M^r Io. Scharpuls,
now with God, and others of the
companie then at Stoade, & now
againe have reviewed and some-
what enlarged the same, vpon oc-
casyon of the trouble of cōscience
wherein I did perceyve manie
good Christians to bee cast for

A 2 want

want of sufficiēt light in the same
question which is heere handled,
desiring to minister some com-
fort vnto them, if it shall please
God to blesse this my endeavour,
in that measure of light which he
hath given me: vse it, and if yee
finde any fruit in it, impart it to
such as have need. The spirit of
comfort and true peace bee with
you to the end. Iuli 20. 1616.

Yours in the Lord

Io. Forbes.

A short Discourse, shewing how a Christian may discerne the testimonie of Gods spirit from the testimonie of his owne spirit, in wit- nessing his Adop- tion.

The same spirit beareth witnesse also together with our spirit, that wee are the sonnes of God, Rom. 8.16.



ELoved
in the Lord, you
desired by your
Letter at my de-
parture frō Stoad,
that I would re-

solve you, in that saying of the
Apostle to the Rom. chap. 8. *The
spirit of God beareth witness with our
spirits, that we are the sonnes of God.*

A 3 How

6 *Gods spirit in vs discerned*

How a man may know when that spirit, doth beare witnes also with our spirit. The occasion moving you to inquire this, being ministred by some speech uttered by me in preaching : sayinge it was not enough for a man, that his own spirit do beare witnes alone.

First, I will shewe you the occasion wherefore I did say so : and next, I will doe my best to satisfie your question, as the Lord hath given me to vnderstand.

It is most certaine, that a mans owne heart (being a thing, as saith *Jeremie, Chap. 17. deccitfull above all things*) will oft times deceyve man him self, and yeeld him a false Testimonie of him selfe, as also of his actions and estate. Is it not said of the Angell of the Church of *Ladicea*: that he said of him self: *I am rich & increased with goods, & have need of nothing.* This doubtles was his

his owne testimonie of him selfe. But what doeth the spirit of God witnes of him : *Thou art wretched, and miserable, and poore, and blind, & naked.* And moreover doth affirme that this Angell did not know he was so.

Doth not Christ also teach vs in the Gospell, that there bee some whose hartes deceyve them, making them trust in themselves that they are iust, and yet are not, and cleares it by the example of the Pharisee, giving thankes ynto God, *That he was not as other men, exhorti- oner, vniust, &c.* who notwithstanding is accompted of God vniust. And to be short, in this point the Lord Iesus sheweth vs that many men at his second comming, shall be miserably deceived by the foolish testimonie of their own hartes: some being confident because of the outward fellowship and fami-

Luke. 18.

8 Gods spirit in vs discerned

liaritie they have had with Christ, both in Word & Sacraments, and therefore pleading thus : *We have eaten and dronke in thy presence, and thou has taught in our streetes, shall nevertheless receyve this answer: I tell you, I know you not whence you are, depart from me.* Others also vpon the confidence of giftes bestowed vpon them by Christ for the good of his Church, pleading with him and saying : *Lord, Lord, have we not by thy Name prophesied, and by thy Name cast out Divils, and by thy Name done many great works? Shall receyve the same answere.*

Heereby it is evident, that the testimonie of a mans owne heart being alone may be deceitfull, evē when it is builded vpon profession and outward participation of the holy things of G O D. Yea even when it is builded vpon some rare speciall giftes of the holy ghost, which

Luc. 13.22

Mat. 7.22

from our owne spirit.

,

which although they bee necessarie for the body or Church in generall, yet are not requisit in every member to salvation; such as is the gift of *Prophecyng, &c.* and therefore may both be wanting without prejudice, and also had without enioying of salvation.

Thus have wee reason not to trust our Adoption and certaintie of our salvation, to the naked testimonie of our owne hearts, least we be found like the foolish Virgines. It is true, the testimonie of our owne hearts is needfull heerewnto, because sayeth the Apostle, *If our heartes condempe vs, God is 1Ioh.3.22 greater then our heartes: and if our heartes condempe vs not, then have we boldnes towards God.* But it must not be alone, for so it shal never be sure, but having the spirit witnes sing with it, then it is sure.

Now

Now yet before I speake of the discerning of the spirites testimo-
nie, I must forewarne you of this one thing, to wit, that there bee
many effectes of the spirit in the Saints oft times, which at the first
the Saintes know not to bee from the spirit, and that both in their
first calling, and after they be cal-
led, and therefore wee must not
measure the working of the spirit
in vs by our discerning, neyther
must we iudge our selves destitute
of the spirit, albeit wee doe not
discerne the effectes wrought in
vs, to bee from the spirit: for the
Saints will feele strange effectes
wrought in their mindes, which
they will neither knowe whence
they come, nor wherevnto they
tend. This is verified by Iesus
Christ him self, speaking of the ve-
nic working of the spirit in our spi-
rituall

ritual birth, whereby we are made the children of God, comparinge it to the winde: *The winde (saith he) bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but can not tell whence it commeth, nor whither it goeth: so is every man (saith Christ) that is borne of the spirit.*

This shall not seeme strange to vs if we marke what is saide of the Disciples at *Ephesus*, who were baptized as appeareth by *Apolllos*, *Acts.19.3* and yet they confesse to *Paul* that they had not so much as heard whether there were an *H. ghost*. It may bee also very apparantlie thought, that *Peter* when hee did witnessse of Christ, that he was the *Christ the Sonne of the living God*, *Mat.16.16* did not knowe that testimonie to have bene from the spirit of God, and therefore Christ (to teach him that that testimonie was not the testimonie of his owne heart, but

but by the spirit of God) did tell him that flesh and bloud had not reveyled that to him, but his Father that is in heaven.

This I speake not to make men carelesse in trying whether they have the spirit or no, but to comfort weake Christians, who althoough they have the livelie effectes of the spirit, yet have not come so farre as to bee able to discerne them to be from the spirit, as sometimes they will bee taught to vnderstande, and can not tell how at the first, and to repent, and can not tell how, and to rejoyce, and can not tell how, and to love God and his Saints, and can not tell how, and to beleeve, and can not tell how, which all notwithstanding are the proper workes of the spirit.)

303 Neither speake I this to shunne the answering of your question touch-

touching the discerning of the sp̄ites testimonie, which I pray the Lord to teach vs all, seeing there can indeed no solide ioy possesse our mindes, till we feeke the spirit of Adoption sealing vp the certaintie of our electiō in our harts: for if we bee sonnes (as saith the Apostle) *the Lord hath sent forth the spirit of his sonne in our heartes, which crieth Abba, Father: and therefore if any man hath not the spirit of Christ, the same is not his.* Galat. 4.6. Rom. 8.15

Seeing then it is even by the spirit which he hath givē vs, that we know our selves to bee the sonnes of God, and that God as our Father abydeth in vs, as saith *John*: I. Joh. 3.24 It is a most necessarie studie, and most commendable in a Christian, to trie if he hath the spirit.

Now therefore to come to your question, I will speake of it in all sobrietie accordinge to that measure

¶ *Gods spirit in vs discerned
sure of faith which the Lord hath
given me.*

First in generall, it shall not bee
amisse to know what is the Testi-
monie of the spirit.

Secondly, after what maner the
spirit doth give testimonie.

And lastly, we shall cleerlie see
how to discerne it from the testi-
monie of our owne spirit.

In generall, the whole word of
God is the testimonie of the spirit.
For whatsoever is therein contay-
ned, the spirit doeth witnes it, and
nothing els doeth the spirit wit-
nes, but that which is contayned
in the word: therefore is the word
of God called his Testimon.

*Psal. 19. testimonie of the Lord is sure. And a-
gaine: God established a Testimonie
in Iacob. And oft times in the 119.
Psalme, the Lords wordes are cal-
led his Testimonies, because everie
sentence of the word, is a testimo-*

nic

nie of Gods will : Therefore is it
that the Prophet commands vs to
goe to the Lawe and to the Testi- ^{Esa.8.}
monie. For nothing can we know
of Gods minde towards vs, except
we hearken what the spirit speakes
in his worde. and therefore, Christ
willett vs to search the Scriptures, ^{Ioh.5.39.}
because they witnes of him. So,
whatsoever the worde doeth per-
swade our hearts touching GOD
and his love in Christ, that is the
Testimonie of the spirit: and ther-
fore when hearing the worde of
God, our hearts receyves anie as-
surance or perswasion of redemp-
tion, remission of sinnes, &c. that
same is and must be the spirits te-
stimonie. As for example, whē by
the word a man is made to knowe
Christ to be the Lord, the Redee-
mer, &c. doubtlesse that is a testi-
monie of Gods spirit, by the word
witnessing to the heart that trueth
and

16 *Gods spirit in vs discerned*
and causing the heart to beleve it.
But heere wee must carefully take
heede, that our hearts bee not de-
ceyved touching that which you
most disire to know, that is, touch-
ing our Adoption, by mistaking
the spirits testimonie. For eschew-
ing this danger we have to vnder-
stande that the spirit by the worde
perswades two maner of wayes, to
wit, generallie and speciallie, ge-
nerallie when that which is recey-
ed out of the worde is generally
beleeeved as Gods truth: speciallie
when it is speciallie beleeeved. The
generall is no warrant of adoptiō.
For in that sort the very Divells
Iam.2.19. beleeeve and tremble, saith *Iames*: a
reprobate may beleeeve generally
all to be true which is in the word
of God, and yet never have anie
testimonie of the spirit, of his par-
ticular adoption, hee may beleeeve
that Christ is a Saviour of sinners,
and

and yet not beleeve that hee is a Saviour vnto him: he may beleeve that God in Christ will forgive sinners: and yet no wayes have assurance of the remission of his owne sinnes: yea hee may bee a Preacher, and be witnes of all the promises of God in Christ to others, & yet have no parte in them him selfe. Therefore leaving this generall testimonie of the spirit, I come to the speciall testimonie, which wee must discerne before our Adoption bee sealed to vs. And in discerning this, there is also great wisedome required: for therein also may a man be deceyved. For there is some sort of speciall testificatiō that witnesseth not adoption. For vnderstanding hereof, we must consider that the spirits testimonie in speciall maner is of two sortes.

B The

18 *Gods spirit in vs discerned*

The first is, when hee witnesseth and reveiles grace particularlie to a man, but imprints not the thing reveiled in the heart, neither seales it in his soule.

The second is, when not onely he revycles and witnesseth the promises in speciall manner to a man, but also writeth them in his heart, and seales them in his soule. Now to make this more plaine, we must consider what are the wordes of Gods covenant in Christ with the elect. After these dayes (saith the Lord) *I will put my Lawes in their minde, and in their heart I will write them.* If we waye these wordes aright, we shall see that which I have spoken, cleere. GOD in giving his Lawe spake to his people, and by his spirit witnessed his will to them: but this word which was spoken, was not written in their hearts, but in tables of stone: therefore

*Ier. 31.
Heb. 8.*

fore the Iewes did not abyde in that covenant. The peculiar promise of God to the elect in Christ is, that he shall write his wordes in their hearts. When the ^{Hebr. 8.9.} Lords spirit, witnesseth, & in witnessing writes the thing witnessed, in the heart, it is an assurance of Gods effectuall speaking : but when hee witnesseth to the heart, & yet writes not that testimonie in the heart, it is no testimonie of adoption. To make this plaine : it is certaine, there can be no true faith in the heart, where the worde of G O D abydeth not. Christ shewes this in the fift chap. of *John*, speakinge to the Iewes, *His worde* (sayeth hee) ^{Ioh. 5.38.} *have ye not abyding in you, because yee beleieve not in him whom he hath sent:* declaring that the abyding of the worde in man, and beleeving, doe still accōpanie one the other. And if we will consider his speech in

201 Gods spirit in vs discerned

Ioh.6.45. the sixt chap. of Iohn, wee shall see
that the cause why his worde did
not abyde in them, was, because
they were not taught of God, that
is, they had not hard nor learned
of the Father, according to his pro-
mise, I will put my lawes in their
minde; and in their heart will I
write them: therefore it is that
Moses speakinge of the estate of
the chosen children of God vn-
der grace, saith, that this cōmande-
ment which I command thee this
day (meaning thereby the worde
of the Father) is not bid from thee,
neither is it farre from thee, it is not
in the heaven, that thou shouldest say,
who shall goe up for vs to heaven, and
bring it vs, and cause vs to heare it,
that we may do it: neither is it beyond
the sea, that thou shouldest say, who shall
goe over the sea for vs, and bring it vs
and cause vs to heare it, that wee may
doe it: but the word is very neare un-

Deut.30.

11.

so thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy
bears for to doe it. The Apostle ex- Rom.10.
pounds the same to the Rom. and 68.
shewes that this is the word of the
Father which they did preach. For
this is the promise of God to his
Church vnder the Gospell; by the
mouth of his Prophet: *All thy chil- Esay.54.
dren shalbe taught of the Lord*: and 13.
this is the Lords teaching, evē the
writing of his word in the hart by *Ioh.8.30.*
his spirit. Of the first sort of this
speciall receyving the word, you
may read in Iohn: it is said of the
Iewes, *many beleevēd in Christ*, & yet
these same doth Christ declare to
be the servants of sinne, & childre
of the devill, & murtherers. and in
the 37. verfe he shewes why they
were such, because his word had
no place in the: therefore doth he
warn the in the 31. ver. that if they
did cōtinue in his word, they were
verily his discipl. teaching thereby

B 3 that

22 *Gods spirit in vs discerned*

that it is not the receyving of his word simplic, that maketh vs disciples : but the abydiug in it, which none can doe that hath it not written in their heart by the spirit. Of the second sorte of the speciall receyving the word, you may read in the 17.chap. of Iohn, in the wordes of Christ concerning his Disciples : *I have given*

Ioh 17.8.

them the wordes which thou gavest me, & they have receyved them, &c.

Of both these sortes of receyving the spirites testimonie, you may read in the Gospell of Saint Math, in the Parable of the Sower, the one is like the ground which receyveth seed, but yeeldeth no fruit againe: the other is like the ground which receiveth the seed, and bringeth forth fruit in abundance: because God the Father is the Husbande man thereof: as Christ sayeth in the 15.chapter of

Mat. 13.

18.

John.

John. But you may aske, how I can call this sorte of witnessinge which is fruitlesse, to be the spiritis testimonie? Remēber I pray you what the Apostle saieith to the *Corinshians*, No man can call Iesus Lord but by the H.ghost. Where-
by it is plaine that there is no pos-
sibilitie in man of receyving or ac-
knowledging any part of that my-
sterie of godlynēs, without the spi-
ritis working. And yet, albeit this
be the worke of the spirit, yet doth
it not prove him in whom it is, to
be the childe of God. For Christ
saieth plainly, *Not every one that call me Lord, Lorde, shall enter into the kingdome of heavens.*

And because this same effect in
the verie reprobate, is the work of
the spirit (for the naturall man can
not perceyve the things of the spi-
rit) therefore are the very repro-
bate thus illuminate after this ma-

24 Gods spirit in vs discerned
Heb.6.4. ner said, to have bene made parta-
kers of the H. ghost, not that ever
that spirit of Adoptiō, which God
sendes foorth in the heartes of his
sonnes to seale them vnto the day
of redemption, was ever sent into
their hearts. But because even that
light & tast of heavely things whi-
che they received, was by the wor-
king of the H. ghost : although he
never did give thē ful possession of
them by imprinting them in their
harts, & sealing thē in their soules.
For that which Christ saith to his
discip. (whē he promiseth to send
thē the spirit of truth) remayneth
still true, that the world can not re-

Ioh.14.17 ceive him, because it seeth him not
neither knoweth him : & therfore
wee may iustly say, that they who
receive this tast of Christ & of the
good word of god, do not discern
the spirit to worke these thinges,
because they neither see him nor
know him, neither cā they receive
him,

hith, but are like vnto natural men,
who albeit they have their being,
& life, & moving in God, yet still
remain without God in this world.

Act. 17.28

But it may the be demanded how
it is that they are said to bee made
partakers of the H. ghost: and what
difference is there betwixt them &

Eph. 2.
12.

the elect in the participatiō of the
spirit: To vnderstand this, we must
remember that ther must be a cer-
tain participatiō of the spirit wher-
soever any effect of the spirit is
fouđ in whatsoever measure or ma-
ner. But we are to mark a diffcreēc
both of measure & maner. For as a
mā that hath an excellent piece of
wine to sel, wil give to al that com,
so much as is sufficiēt to make the
knowe the tast of it, yet he giveth
not to every one such a quātūie as
is sufficiēt to bring nourishment &
refreshment to their bodyes & spi-
rits. And as a phisicion that hath
prepared a comfortable potiō for

the

26 God's spirit in vs discerned

the health of a beloved patient, he will give to others a little of it to make them apprehende the taste of it: but not so, as to have anie strength to make anie operation in their stomacke: for that quantitie hec gives onely to the patient for whose health it is prepared.

Nowe they who tasted of this wine or potion, can discerne the goodnesse of it, albeit they never did drinke it, nor ever be partakers of the refreshing power of it.

So is it with the Lorde in his dispensation: he vseth sometimes onely to give a naked sight and knowledge of Christ, and his mercie in him, to men: and this I called before a generall perswasion of the spirit, when men are made to know Christ in generall, but without all sense or feelinge of him. Sometimes the spirit comes nearer, and touches the heart with Christ

YOR 0137 SIG 10.1002 B 2015

and

and with the powers of the world
to come, even so farre, as the heart
receiveth a tast of the love of God,
& of the mercies of God in Christ,
in such sorte, that they receive the
word incontinentlie with ioy : as
faith Christ. The spirit havinge in Math. 13.
20.
that measure testified the worde
to them, as is sufficient to make
them to taste the sweetnes of it :
albeeit hee never fill their heart
with it, nor imprint it in their
mindes, that they may finde the
power of it vnto life. The last de-
gree of the spirites witnessinge, is,
when not onely he touches the
lippes with grace to make the tast
of it felt : but when hee poures in
the love of God, and all the graces
reveyled in the worde, and sheddeth
them abroad in the heart : as saith
the Apostle to the Romans, and
so makes the heart to enioy, re-
ceyve and possess the promise by Rom. 5.5.

im.

printing it therein. So that the working and witnessing of the spirit, in the wicked, is like the smell of an Apothecaris shop : which one that passeth by, receyveth, although hee never carrie anie of these odoriferous things with him. But the witnessing of the spirit, to the elect, is by imparting the thing witnessed to the soule, & making it reallie to possesse it. So that if a man could see the soule of a true child of God, he should see ingraven in it, mercie, peace, love, righ- teousnes, life, ioy, and Christ him selfe, all the promises of God in Christ, being written therein, by the spirit, according to the covenant of God. Conforme to this, doth the Apostle speake of the spirits witnessing to the hearts of the Corinthians, when hee saith, *ye are manifest to bee the Epistle of Christ,*

Christ, ministred by vs, and written, not with inck, but with the spirit of the livinge G O D: not in Tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.

Nowe therefore wee come to speake of this witnessinge of the spirit which is proper to the elect: And to the ende wee may cleerlie discerne, the testimonie of the spirit, which witnesseth with our spirits, that we are the sonnes of G O D: wee must yet more deepelie marke and consider this testimonie.

The worke of the spirit in assuring vs of Adoption, is twoofolde.

The firste, for distinction, wee shall call this first writinge of the worde reveyled, in our hearts, and so makinge vs to beleeve in God, as our God and Father in Christ. Eph. 1. 13

The

39 Gods spirit in vs discerned

The second, is our sealing, after we have beleaved. That it is so, ye may see in the wordes of the Apostle to the Ephesians. *In whom also (sayes he) ye have trusted after that ye heard the word of trutb, even the Gospell of your salvation, wherein also after yee beleaved, yee were sealed with the holy spirit of promise.*

Marke first this worke of the spirit, in causing vs to beleeve in God, by the effectuall revelation of the worde: next, marke that other worke of the spirit, after we have beleaved, in sealing vs. The firt of these two, although it bee felt by vs, yet at the firt, wee can not discerne it to be the worke of the spirit, till afterward. For, before we be made spirituall, we can discerne nothing of the spirit: because the things of the spirit are spiritually discerned. But when we receyve the spirit which is of God,

Cor.2.

God, then are we able to knowe
the things which are given to vs
of God. Therefore that testimonie
whereof the Apostle speakeſt to
the Rom. which witnesseth with
our spirits: is to be vnderſtood of
the ſeconde worke of the ſpirit,
which is our ſealing.

That we may vnderſtande this
aright, we muſt conſider that there
is ſomething that cometh in in vs
betwixt the firſt worke of the ſpi-
rit and the ſecond. And that is the
teſtimonie of our owne ſpirit, bea-
ring witneſſe, that we are the ſonnes
of God. For when God by his ſpi-
rit, hathim printed in our heartes,
the word of promife, then begins
our hearts to ſay, we are the chil-
dren of God: being perſwaded by
the ſpirit, ſecretlie inſinuating the
worde in our hearts to beleeve, & ^{10.} Psal. 116.
beleeving to ſpeak: according as it ^{10.}
is ſaid, *I believed & therefore did ſpeak.* ^{1 Cor. 4.}

Now ^{13.}

32 *Gods spirit in vs discerned*

Luc. 22.

31.

Psal. 68.

28.

Now it might seeme there neede-
ded no more. but let vs remember
what Christ saith to Peter, Simon,
*Simon, behold Sathan hath desired to
sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for
thee that thy faith faile not.* So wee
have need that our heartes be esta-
blished in that worke of the spirit,
otherwayes we should bee in dan-
ger to make shipwracke of faith &
of a good conscience: which is no-
thing els but this testimonie of
our owne hearts. Therefore doth
the Church pray in the Psalme:
*Establish O God that which thou hast
wrought in vs.* And the Apostle, af-
ter hee hath given thankes vnto
God for the Thessalonians effec-
tuall calling, he prayes to G O D,
*That hee who had given them this
good hope through grace, would also e-
stablish them in everie word and good
worke.* Therefore is it that our
God, for stablishing vs in faith, &

in

in the assurance of our Adoption, seales vs by the holy spirit of promise. This is manifest out of the former place to the Ephes. where he saith, *That afier they beleaved, they were sealed with the holy spirit of promise.* This same doth the Apostle to the Gallat. confirme, when hee sheweth that Christ was sent to this ende, to redeeme vs : *That Gal.4.6, we might receyve the Adoption of the sonnes:* and then he addeth, *and because yee are sonnes, G O D bath sent forrib the spirit of his sonne into your hearts, that crieth abba, Father.* And that this sealing of vs, by sendinge forth the spirit of Adoptiō in our hearts, is the meane whereby God establisheth vs, it is manifest by the Apostle to the Corinthians. For when first hee hath shewed, ^{2 Cor.11.21.} that it is God which establisheth, saying, *It is God which establisheth vs with you in Christ :* then addeth

C he

34 God's spirit in vs discerned
he the meane whereby God did
stablish them, saying: and hath an-
ointed vs, who hath also sealed vs, and
hath given the earnest of the spirit in
our hearts. Which three sayings are
all one thing in substance. There-
fore doeth Iohn, from this anoin-
ting, confirme and assure these to
whom he did write, against the
fearing to fall away: but (saith he)
*The anointing which yee receyved of
him, dwelleth in you: and as it taught
you, yee shall abide in him.* And the
Apostle to the Corinthians takeith
the Argument of his confidence
3 Cor. 5.5 from this, *that God hath given vs the
earnest of the spirit.* And the same
Apostle from this giving of vs the
spirit of libertie which crieth Ab-
ba Father, proveth vs to bee the
sonnes of God in that eight chap.
Rom. 8.15 to the Romanes. Whereby it is
16. plaine, that by these three, the self-
same thing is meant: albeit divers-
lie

2 Ioh. 2.
27.

3 Cor. 5.5

Rom. 8.15

16.

lie expressed : accordinge to the
three sortes of confirmation, the
one by anointing, so were Kings,
Priestes and Prophetes confirmed
in their calling : the other by an
earnest, which is a confirmation of
the bargaine, and of the payement
of the full somme : and the last, by
sealing, which in all writes, con-
tractes, and obligations, is a con-
firmation of all therein contey-
ned and promised. Accordinge to
which, amongst the *Persians*, what
soever was sealed with the Kinges
Ring, could not bee changed nor
revoked. Therefore, whomsoever
God sealtes vnto life, as his child :
he is made most sure of eternall
life. For this cause is it, that in the
Revelatiō, God first will have his *Revel. 7.3*
childre sealed before the enemies
can have power to execute their
malice, and of these thus sealed, it
is, that Christ saith, *that the gates* *Ma. 16. 18*

Ioh.10.23

36 Gods spirit in vs discerned
of hell shall not prevayle against them.
And that they shall never perish, nei-
ther shall any plucke them out of his
bande.

Ioel 2. 28.
Act. 2. 17.
Ioh. 2. 2.

Io. 14.

And oyle on Aaron: therefore are
we saide to have this anointing
from him which is holy, and that
it teacheth vs, and that it is true, &
not lying: according to that whi-
che is said by Christ of the spirit:
*I will pray the Father, & he will give
you another comforter, that hee may a-
byde with you for ever, even the spirit
of trueth, he shall teach you all things;*

2 Cor. 5. 5 And the same also is our earnest:
therefore it is called the earnest of
the spirit: and also the first fruities
of

of the spirit. So by the same spirit, as by oyle, as by earnest, as by a seale, doth God stablish our harts, in that which they doe witnes to vs, touching our Adoption. And that doth the Apostle signific whē he saith, *the same spirit beareth wit-nes with our spiriſſ, that wee are the ſonneſ of God.* Rom. 8. 16.

Marke then the order of Gods working. First he speakes the word of trueth to the heart, and in ſpeaking, writes it in the heart: heere- vpon the heart is made to beleeve that which it hath heard & recey- ved, from the spirit: and when it beleeveth, it ſpeakes, and the thing it ſpeakes, is that ſame, which is engrave in it, by the spirit: to wit, that God is his God, and hee his child. For never can the hart of a man ſpeak one word of mercie to him, nor of Adoption, till the ſpirit of God have ſpoken first mer-

C, cie

38 *Gods spirit in vs discerned.*

cie to it. Nowe when the spirit of man hath spoken, and given testimonie to him of his election, then the Lord for establishing the heart in this, and confirming man in the testimonie of his heart, he addeth his spirit: and by the testimonie thereof, seales this promise in the heart, and makes Adoption and eternall life, most certaine and sure to the soule, that he dare be bold with the Apostle to say, *Who shall lay any thing to my charge? who shall condemn me? who shall seperate me from the love of Christ: I am perswaded that neither death nor life, nor anguish, &c. shall bee able to seperate me from the love of God which is in Jesus Christ my Lord.*

And that we may yet more evidently see the necessarie of this testimonie of Gods spirit: we are to consider that albeit our own harts have in them a power to witnes

unto

vnto vs what wee are both by na-
ture and by grace, yet the testimo-
nie of our heartes touching our e-
state by grace, is not so fullie and
confidentlie to bee reposed vpon
and trusted, as the testimonie ther-
of touching our estate by nature.
For wee may assuredly trust our
hearts and cōsciences, when vpon
anie guiltines they condemne vs, Dent. 27.
seeing hee is cursed who abydes 21.
not in everie jot of the Law to ful- Gal. 3.10.
fil it: & he that trāsgresseth one cō-
mandment, is guiltie of all: but we
are not always to give absolut cre-
dit to our consciences, when vpon
conceit of innocēcie they iustifie
vs. For although our consciences
accuse vs of nothing, yet thereby
we are not iustified, as is plaine by
the saying of the Apost. touching
himself 1. Cor. 4.4. the reason here-
of is, because our consciences doe
not so cleerlie see our estate which

40 *Gods spirit in vs discerned*
is from God, neither can they of
them selves so truely iudge of it, as
they may do of their estate by na-
ture, when they are illuminate by
God : for then they are made to
know and cleerly to see that in vs
there is no goodnes, and therefore
ther is iust reason why they should
condempne vs. And we are verily
to beleeve our harts vpō this sight
and knowledge condempning vs.
but on the other part, although
we see the minde of God towards
vs in Christ, yet we can not so
throughly apprehende his promi-
ses vpon any sight we receive, that
we dar trust our felicitie absolutly
to the testimonie of our owne
hearts. First, because our heartes
may be deceyved, as is evident by
scripture, that many shall bee. Se-
condly, because wee may mistake
the working of God in vs, and lay
hold on a wrong ground. Third-
lic,

lie, because our heartes are more prone to speake good nor evill of our selves, even when they have never so small occasion to doe so, and when they have much more occasion to do the contrarie. And lastlie, because all men are lyars, & onely God is true, and therfore we must never give so much credit to our consciences, speaking good of vs, as when they speake evill : speciallie when the question is of being the sonnes of God, or not : so that even when they witnes that we are the sonnes of God, wee are not to rest herevpon except God, who only knoweth whom he hath chosen, doe by his spirit confirme the testimonie of our spirit. For we may much more surely trust our heartes in that which is in our selves and from our selves, then in that which is neither from our selves nor in our selves, but is the free gift

42 *Gods spirit in vs discerned*
gift of God in Christ. Therefore
that we should not bee deceyved
by our deceitful harts, God secou-
deith our owne testimonie tou-
ching his taking of vs for his chil-
dren, by his spirit, witnessinge the
same: even as by his owne mouth
cōfirming our adoptiō. For by the
mouth of two or three witnes-
ses shal everie word be stablished.

Thus I have shewen you what
is the spirits testimonie, & in what
manner he gives it, and how ne-
cessarie it is. Now I come to that
which you desired to know: that
is, how wee discerne the testimo-
nie of the spirit which seales our
Adoption from the testimonie of
our owne spirit. For knowledge of
this, First, let vs consider, that there
be three things, whereby wee dis-
cerne our Election and Adoption
from the spirit of God. The first
is his presence with vs. The se-
cond

cond is his worke in vs. The third
is his voyce vnto vs.

Touching the first: the verie
presence of the spirit of Adoptiō,
is a witnessse of our Adoption. For
the spirit is the earnest of the in-
heritance of God, as wee have
shewen before: therefore whoso-
ever hath the spirit, the verie ha-
ving of him, is a sure testimonie to
that man, that he is the sonne of
God: *For he that hath the spirit of*
Christ, he is Christes: as by the con- Rom.8.9;
trarie, he that hath not the spirit of
Christ, is not Christes. Now the ha-
ving of the spirit is discerned by
the other two, that is, by the work,
and by the voyce: therefore those
two are chiefly to be considered:
first his worke in vs, which must
go before his voyce: I meane this
voyce which seales Adoptiō: For
otherwayes his voyce alwayes go-
eth before his worke: for it is by
the

44 *Gods spirit in vs discerned
the worde, that hec worketh, all
things in vs.*

For vnderstanding of this work
and voyce of the spirit which sea-
lenth adoption, marke the wordes
of the Apostle in that same eight
chap. of the Rom, touchinge the
spirit, *Yee have not receyved* (sayeth
Rom.8.15, he) *the spirit of bondage to feare a-
gaine, but yee have receyved the spirit
of Adoption, whereby mee crye, Abba
Father.* Heere Adoption (vnder
which is vnderstood libertie) is op-
poned to bondage, as the effect of
the spirit. Next, the voyce follow-
ing heerevpon, is manifest in the
wordes following: (*wherby mee
crye, Abba, Father*). Which crye,
more plainly is saide by the Apo-
stle to the Galathians, to bee the
crie of the spirit, saying: *and because
yee are sonnes, God hath sent forth the
spirit of his sonne in your harts which
crye Abba, Father.* And therefore
is

is it that the Apostle to the Romans saith, *that the same spirit beareth witnesse with our spirit, that we are the children of God.* What then is this worke of the spirit in vs, that witnesseth Adoption? This speciaall worke, is, libertie, or freedome: accompanied ever with peace, boldnes, confidence, and rejoycing. This is plaine by these places of scripture. First, the Apostle to the Corinthians, speaking of this first great effect of the spirit, saith: *Now 2. Cor. 3. the Lord is the spirit, and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is libertie:* ^{17.} and of the peace that accompanieth this libertie, the Apostle speakes plainlie to the Ephesians, where, after he hath shewē, that by Christ we are delivered from the Law of commandements & hatred, that thereby did lye vpon vs, and hath spoken of the peace followinge therevpon, hee proves this peace by ^{Eph. 2.13.}

46 God's spirit in vs discerned
by these wordes: for shrough him
Eph.2.18 wee both haue an entrance vnto the
Father by one spirit. Therefore the
same Apostle to the Romans,
Rom.5.1. sayeth, That being iustified by faith,
wee haue peace towardes God. Of this
boldnes and confidence, the A-
postle speakes to the Ephesians,
Eph.3.12 saying: By whom wee haue boldnes
and accessse with confidence by faith
in him. Therefore is it that the
Apostle to the Romans, sayeth:
That wee haue not receyved the spiril
of bondage vnto feare, but the spiril
that is without feare, that is, of bold-
nes and confidence. Touching re-
joycing, the Apostle Peter spe-
keth, saying: In whom beleeving, yet
reioyce with ioye unspeakable and
glorious. The same also affirmeith
the Apostle to the Rom. saying &
Rom.5.2. we reioyce vnder the hope of the glorie
of God, neither so onely, but wee reioyce
also in tribulations, and he addes the
reason,

from our owne spirite.

45

reason, because the love of God is shed abroad in our beartes by the holy gho:z
whiche is given vnto vs. This I call
the speciaall working of the spirit,
for sealing our Adoption: because
these effectes cannot possible bee
in vs, except the spirit of adoption
worke them. and therefore who-
soever hath them, hee hath an vn-
doubted testimonie of his adopti-
on, from the verie spirit of adop-
tion. For this libertie, and effectes
of it, are not the worke of a mans
owne hart: but the work of Gods
spirit, in the heart: making it free,
& causing it to rejoyce, & making
it cōfident towards God, that this
may be cleere, we have to consider
the estate of man, first, in ignorance
and blindnes, before he knewe ei-
ther God, or him selfe. Secondly,
his estate vnder the Lawe. And
lastlie, his estate vnder grace tho-
rough the Gospell.

11

In the two former cases, there is nothing in mans heart, but blindnes, or the spirit of bondage, vnto feare: yea even in the verie elect, before they receyve this spirit of Adoption and grace, by the Go. spell.

In man by nature, as he is borne, there is nothinge but blindnes, I say nothing, not that I exclude bondage: for in both the first two estates of man, blindnes and bondage doe accompanie each other: but in the first estate, blindnes so reigneth, that bondage is not perceyved nor felt. In the second, althoough blindnes be so farre taken away, as man see and feele his bondage: yet it is not so taken away, that it hide not from him his libertie and freedome. Therefore in the first he is the slave of blindnes and darknesse: because the power thereof is predominant in him: holding

holding him in ignorāce of God,
of him selfe, of sinne, and of true
righteousnes. Therefore doth the
scripture say, *T*here is none that *vn-*
derstandeth, there is none that seeketh
God. And the Apost. to the Eph-
esians, shewing the naturall estate
of man, declareth that he is *with-*
our Christ, an alien from the com-
mon wealth of Israel, a stranger from
the covenant of promise, without hope,
and without God in the worlde. And
therefore speakeinge of the vaine
conversation of men naturall, hee
sheweth the causes of it to be this,
because they have their *understanding*
darkened, beeing strangers from the
life of God, through the ignorāce that
is in them. And most cheerlie in the
fift chapter, *for ye were once darknes,*
meaning by nature: and therefore
they who are effectuallie called to
grace, are in that same place saide,
to be light in the Lord. And by the

D Apo.

Rom. 3.11

Eph. 2.12

Ep. 4.8

Cha. 5.8

30 God's spirit in vs discerned

1. Pet. 2. 9. Apostle Peter, are said, to be called of God out of darkness to his marveylous light. And to the Thessalonians, they that are called, are saide, to be of the day and of the light. And they which are not called, are saide, to be of the night, and of darkness. And the Apostle to the Colossians (willing to shewe the force of darkness in holding men in bondage) expresses their calling by G O D, in these wordes : *who hath drawen vs out under the power of darkness.* So it is manifest, that in our estat e naturall, wherein (as saith the Apostle to the Galathians) *wee knowe not God.* darkness hath power and dominion over vs in such sorte, that we have no libertie of minde, nor body, to serve God : the minde being kcpt in ignorance of God, of righteousness and of sinne. And so consequentlie, man in this e-state, is without feare. Not be-
ca use

Colos. 1.
13.

Gal. 4. 8.

cause he is not in danger, but because hee seeth not his danger. Therefore alfo may he bee secure, because he is senselesse: but confident hee can not be, because hee hath no knowledge. It is true, men in this case are commonly most peart in sinne, and bolde in wickednesse, against GOD: because they know neither him, nor them selves. And therefore, oft tymes, as foolish flies, they rush vpon the candle: or blinde horses doe runne against the wall: but bolde and confident in him, they can not be, who knowes him not in Christ. Therefore doth the Apostle declare that the cause why such men give themselves to wantonnesse, is, because they have no feeling.

Eph.4.19.

Now in the second estate, vnder the Lawe, we are further from libertie, and the remaynant bleſſ-

D 2 sings

52 God's spirit in vs discerned
sings of the spirit of Adoptiō. For
albeit that some light arise in the
heart, by the Lawe : as the know-
ledge of sinne (conforme to that
Rom.7.7 of the Apostle, *I knew not sinne but
by the Law*) yet this light, doth
only reveyle to man his bondage :
but doth not remove nor remedie
it : because that was impossible to
the Lawe, *in as much as it was weak
because of the flesh*, as saith the same
Rom.8.3. Apostle. Therefore this light of
the Lawe, although it bee necessarie,
yet it is comfortlesse. For it
Rō.7.14. shewes first to man, that he is *sold*
Gal.3.10. *under sinne*, and that *no good dwel-*
Rō.7.10. *leth in him*. Heerevpon, it reveiles
vnto him, that hee is vnder the
curse of God, and so that hee is
dead. Wherupon it comes to
passe, that God therein is so terri-
ble to man, that hee cannot abyde
him, nor heare him, but is com-
pelled to runne from him : as is
cleare

cleere by the 12.chapt. of the Hebrewes, verse 19, 20. 21. compared with Exod.chapt. 20. verse 18. 19. 20.21. Thus our former blindnes, is turned into bondage, and the fruit of blindnes, that is securitie: is turned in the fruit of bondage, which is feare. Therefore the ministerie of the Lawe, is called, the ministerie of death and condemp. ^{2 Cor. 3.} natiō. And in the first act of Gods calling, the spirit that speaketh in the Lawe, and is given by the ministerie of the Lawe, is called the spirit of bondage, vnto feare. Because the sight and knowledge of our selves, and of God, which the spirit gives vs by the Lawe, workes these effectes. And therefore by that name is distinguished, from the spirit of Adoption, which is given by the Gospell. and this will the Apostle signifie to the Galathians, when he (comparinge the

^{Rom. 8.15}

D, two

54 *Gods spirit in vs discerned*

two Testaments to the two, by
Gal.4.24. whom Abraham begot Ismael &
Isaack) doeth shewe, that the one,
which is from Mount Sinai, doeth
beget vnto bondage.

This being the estate of man,
both by nature and by the Lawe:
it is manifest, that these effectes of
the spirit, which witnesse adopti-
on, are not in man, neither by na-
ture, neither by the Lawe. But
when the free spirit of the Lorde
commeth, then commeth libertie
to the heart. And this spirit of the
Lord (otherwayes called the spi-
rit of promise) comes to vs by the
preaching of faith, and not of the
workes of the Lawe: as witnesseth

Gal.3.2. the Apostle to the Galathians, and
and 14.^o the historie of the Actes of the A-
Act.10. postles.

44.

Nowe then, when the man,
(who first by nature, was vnder
blindnes: and next, by the Lawe,
was

was vnder sinne and death, kept
in bondage and feare) findes him
selfe, first delivered frō that blind-
nes and ignorance of minde : and
next, from that bondage of sinne
and death : and so consequentlie
frō his feare, which was wrought
in him by his bondage, then may
he knowe, that the spirit of adop-
tion, grace, and libertie, hath spo-
ken to his heart, and hath taken
possession of it: because he findes,
that promise accōplished in him,
wherof Zacharias speaketh, in the
Gospell, according to Luke : to
wit; *that God would grant to vs, that*
we being delivered out of the bandes Luk. 1.74
of our enemies, should serve him with-
out feare, all the dayes of our life, in
holynes and righteousness before him.
For this was the ende of Christes
death, sayeth the Apostle to the
Hebreves, to witt, *that bee might*
deliver all them, who for feare of Heb. 2.15
death,

36. *Gods spirit in vs discerned*

Heb. 2.15

death, were all their life tyme subject to bondage. Thus therefore, the *mā*, who can discerne in his hearte, which once was filled with the spirit of bondage vnto feare, the ioyfull libertie of the sonnes of **God**: whereby hee that was the bondman and seruant of sinne, by the Lawe, is now by the Gospell, made the free man of Christ, (the bandes of iniquitie being broken) and so freed, both from the guiltines, and also from the power of sinne: (being iustified by faith in Iesus Christ, and having grace, in the superabundance thereof, reigning through rightheousnes vnto

*Rom. 5.1.
and 21.*

*eternall life through Iesus Christ our Lord:even in the soule, wherein sinne in the abouundance thereof, had reigned through vnrightheousnes vnto death):this mā I say, may easilie discerne, the spirir, witness-
sing his adoption, by this his liber-
tic*

tie from the slauerie of sinne First
in his iustification, next in his san-
ctification: and so consequentlie
from the feare of death following
theron. In place whereof, suc-
ceeds, a ioye vnspeakable & glo-
rious: the hart iustified, rejoicing
in the hope of the glorie of God.

For this cause is it, that the Apo- Pet. 1.8.
stle Peter, willeth vs by *ioyning ver-
tue to our faith, and to vertue know-
ledge, and to knowledge temperance,* 2Pet.1.19
&c. to make our calling and elec-
tion sure. Because our sanctificati-
on (being the worke of the spirit
of adoption) is a sure seale of our
election. And therefore doeth the
Apostle Peter give this reason of
his threatening and rebuke against
Simon Magus, to wit, that albeit he
was baptised, yet the Apostle did
see, that he was in the gale of bit-
ternesse, and in the band of ini-
quitie: wherin, *Simon* being still

cap.

58 God's spirit in vs discerned
captive, could have no assurance
of adoption : albeit, hee had out-
wardly embraced the Gospell :
and therefore is said, to have be-
lieved. And because this worke,
is the great worke of Christ, in the
elect, and chief ende of his com-
ming : Therefore doeth the Pro-
phet Esaie describe the worke of
his comming , and effect of the
spirit of the Lord in him, in these
wordes : *The spirit of the Lorde is
upon mee, the Lord hath annoyned
me, that I shold preach the Gospell to
the poore: that I shold heale the bro-
ken hearted: that I shold preach de-
liverie to the captives, and receyvinge
of sight to the blinde: that I shold set
at libertie them that are bruised, and
that I shold preach the acceptable
yeare of the Lord : to appoint vnto
them that murne in Zion, and to giue
unto them beautie for ashes, the oyle of
joye for mourning, the garmentes of
gladnes*

gladnes for the spirit of heavines, that
they might be called trees of righteous-
nes, the planting of the Lord. Which
Prophesie, Christ sheweth to bee
fulfilled by him selfe in the Go-
spell accordinge to Luc. in the
which it is manifest, that the work
of the spirit, in preaching the Go- Luk.4.18.
spell, is, to worke knowledge and
libertie, in making vs trees of righ-
teousnes, planted by God: and by
libertie, to worke ioye and glad-
nes, in place of mourning & hea-
vines.

Therefore is it by good reason,
that the Apostle forbiddes vs, to Rom.6.12
let sinne reigne in our mortall bodies,
that we should obey it in the lustes ther-
of: in respect wee are made free
from sinne, in Christ: and are
made the servants of God: having
our fruit in holines. And also bid-
deth vs *reioyce always in the Lord:* Phil.4.4.
for there is no condemnation to vs,
shas.

Rom.8.1. *that are in Christ, seeing we are freed
2. from the lawe of sinne and death, by
the lawe of the spirit of life which is in
Christ Iesus.* This is then that great
effect of the spirit of Adoption, in
our heartes, whereby, as by a most
sure testimonie, wee discerne, the
spirit sealing our Adoption. Be-
cause this spirit of adoptiō, which
is given vs by the preaching of the
Gospell, takes away, both these
miseries : to witt, the blindnes,
wherein we are by nature, & next
the bondage, reveiled by the law,
and feare caused thereby.

Havinge thus spoken, of the
worke of the spirit, it followeth
that we consider the voyce of the
spirit.

This voyce of the spirit, is of
two sortes. The first is, when the
spirit within vs, speaketh to God
for vs. The second is, whē the spi-
rit in vs, speaketh from God vnto
vs,

vs. The voice of the spirit to God, is, when we by the spirit, call vpon God as our Father. And this voice of the spirit, is not only an evidece that we have the spirit, but also a witnes of our Adoption : making manifest vnto vs, that the spirit hath wrought in vs, that worke of libertie, whereof we have alreadie spoken.

Touching the first, it is manifest, in that, without the spirit, we can not pray vnto God : as testifieth the Apostle to the Romans, Rom. 8.26 saying : *The spirit also helpeth our infirmities : for wee knowe not what to pray as we eought : but the spirit it self, maketh request for vs with sighes that can not be expressed.* Conforme to this also doth the same Apostle say in that same place, *Wee also who have the first fruities of the spirit, even wee doe sigh in our selves, waitinge for the Adoption.* Rom. 8.23

And

62 God's spirit in vs discerned

And this is clearly confirmed by
Zacha.12. the words of the Prophet Zacha-
rie: *In that day, saith the Lord, I will*
pour upon the house of David, and
upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the
spirit of grace and of compassion, and
they shall looke vpon me who they have
peirched, and they shall lament for
him, &c. The veritie of this point
may be shewed by the nature of
prayer: in which first it is requi-
red, that it be made vnto God. Se-
condly, that it bee made in the
Name of Christ. Thirdly, that it
be made accordinge to the will of
God.

Concerning the first, it cannot
be without the spirit: because we
have no entrance nor accessse to
God in Christ, but by the spirit.
This is manifest by the Apostle,
Eph.2,18. saying: *For through him, wee both*
have accessse to the Father, by one spi-
rit. Secondly, we can not pray in
the

the Name of Christ, except wee acknowledge God his Father, and in him our Father: which we can never doe, except we be taught by the spirit. For (as saith the Apostle) *The spirit beareth witness with Rom. 8. 15 our spirit, that we are the sonnes of God.* Thirdly, no prayer can bee made accordinge to the will of God, but by the spirit: because, *None knoweth the mynde of God, but 1 Cor. 2. 13 the spirit of GOD.* According to Rom. 8. 27. which the same Apostle sayeth: *That he that searcheth the heartes, knoweth what is the meaning of the spirit.* *For hee maketh intercession for the Saints, according to the will of God.* By all these it is plaine, that none can pray which have not the spirit. For the babling of hypocrits, is no prayer: seeing it proceedes not from the spirit. And this is to be vnderstoode of all manner of prayer. For all manner of prayer, be

26. *Gods spirit in vs discerned*
be it confession, petition, supplication, or giving of thankes, must still be by the spirit. According to the saying of the Apostle. *and pray alway in all manner of prayer and supplication in the spirit.*

Ephe.6.

28.

Moreover, this voyce of the spirit is the witnesse of our adoption : and of the worke of our freedome in Christ. Which is evident by the Apostle, First, in that he sayeth, *That by this spirit we crye Abba Father.* And the same Apostle, to witnesse the same trueth, sayeth in another place : *Because yee are sonnes, God hath sent foorth the spirit of his sonne into your heartes, crying Abba Father.* Which crie of the spirit can not bee in vs, vntill first we be the sonnes of God : seeing this crie contayneth in it, a plaine profession of our Adoption, while the spirit in vs, doth call vpō God, as our Father ; and maketh vs call vpon

Gal.4.6.

from our owne spirit.

67

upon him, as our Father.

Secondly, this is manifest by the description, which the Apostle setteth downe, of the spirit, whereby we crye *Abba Father*: *That it is not the spirit of bondage vnto feare,* ^{Rom. 8.15} *but the spirit of adoption.* Which by the contrarie, may be vnderstood, to comprehend freedome and libertie. According to the saying of the Apostle, *Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is libertie.* For they ^{2. Cor. 3.17.} who live in darknesse, and in the bandes of iniquitie, nor yet made partakers of the ioysfull libertie of the sonnes of God, can never with boldnes approach to the throne of grace, to call vpon GOD as their Father. Herevpon it is that the Scriptures absolutely conclude, *That whosoever shall call vpon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved.* ^{Joel. 2.32.} ^{Rom. 10.83.} Because no man can call vpon God, vntill hee beleeveth, that God is his

E God.

69. God's spirit in vs discerned
God, and he his sonne in Christ
according to the saying of the A-
postle, *How shall they call vpon him,
in whom they have not believed?*
Rom.10. This sheweth plainlie, that the spi-
rites crie, or our callinge vpon
God by the spirit, as our Father,
is a sure testimonie of our Adop-
tion, and seale of our effectuall
calling. Therefore, vnder the cal-
ling vpon the Name of the Lord,
is oft set downe, the true and in-
fallible description of Gods chil-
dren: as namelie, to the Corin-
thians, *Vnto the Church of G O D*
1. Cor. 1. 2. *which is at Corinth, with all that call
vpon the Name of the Lord I E S V S
Christ in every place.* And the same
Apostle sheweth, that the foun-
dation of God which remayneth
sure (that is, the election of God)
hath this seale, *Let every one that*
2. Tim. 2. 1. *calleth vpon the Name of the Lord, de-
part from iniquitie.* Declaring plain-
lic,

lie, that to call vpon the Name of the Lord, is as much as to be one of Gods elect children: which in that same place is made manifest, by this other sentence, *Follow 2. Tim. 3; after righteousnes faith, love and peace* ^{22.} *with them that call upon the Name of the Lord with pure hearts.*

Thus wee are to take our calling or cryinge on the Name of the Lorde, with boldnes, in that confidence, and assruance which faith bringeth, for a sure testimo-
nie of the spirit of Adoption, pos-
sessing our heartes, and so of our
Adoption.

The other voyce of the spirit, to wit, when the spirit speaketh from God to vs, is likewise a most so-
lide, firme, and infallible testimo-
nie of our Adoption. And this
sorte of voyce, is that whereof the
Prophet speakeith, *And thine eare* ^{Isay. 30;} *shall heare the voyce of one behinde* ^{21.}

E 2 bcc,

Hof. 2.14

Psal. 51.8.

68 Gods spirit in vs discerned
thee, saying: This is the way, &c. Of
the same doeth the Lord speake in
another place, saying: I will allure
her and bring her in the wildernes, and
speake kindly unto her. Which pla-
ces, are not onely to bee refer-
red, to the Lords speaking to his
Church, in the exterrnall ministe-
rie of his word: but are speciallie
to be vnderstode, of the inward
working of God in the heart, by
his spirit. Of which sorte of voyce
David speaketh, when hee sayeth
to the Lord, Let mee heare ioye and
gladnesse, that the bones which thou
hast broken, may reioyce. And this
sorte of voyce is three folde, for it
consisteth eyther in Gods teach-
ing, or in his confirmininge of that
which he teacheth: or then in his
conforting of his children in their
afflictions. Of the first, that is his
teaching voyce, wee have spoken
before.

For

10 For God by his spirit, speakes
to vs, when inwardlie he openeth
our heartes, and maketh vs heare
his word of grace, and to vnder-
stande it, & to receyve it. Of this
worke Christ speaketh, when hee
sayeth: *But the Comforter which is
the holy spirit, whom the Father will
sende in my Name, bee shall teach you
all things.* Secondly, God is said to
speake vnto vs, by his spirit, when
hee confirmeth to vs, the thinge
which he hath spoken: and of this
wee have also spoken in generall.

Io.14.26.

And of this kinde of voyce spea-
keth the Apoitle in that place to
the Romanes, sayinge: *The same Rō.8.15.
spirit bareth witnesse with our spirit,
that wee are the sonnes of God.* Of
this confirmation, the same Apo-
stle, speaketh to the Corinht, whē
he saith, *As the testimonie of Iesu* 1.Cor.1.6
Christ was confirmed in you. Which
wordes shewe the cleare evidence

of that two sould testimonie of the spirit, whereof wee did speake before : The one, when God wri-
teth his word in our hearts: which heere is vnderstood by the testi-
monie of Christ. The other, when he seales that which hee hath spo-
ken, and in speaking hath written in our heartes: and that is here vnder-
stood, by the cōfirming of the testimonie of Iesus in vs. And for
this work of cōfirmation, the spirit is called the earnest & seale of God

And as God by his spirit sealeth and confirmeth all the promises in Christ, and also all what hee himselfe hath wrought in vs accord-
ing to the promise. So among other things, he specially cōfirmeth our Adoption, whē the spirit bea-
reth wiitnesse to vs, that we are the sonnes of God. After that first he hath effectuallie called vs by tea-
ching vs and working faith in our
hearts,

hearts, and also hath made our hearts (now beleeving) speake to vs that we are sonnes.

Thirdly, God is said to speake vnto vs by his spirit, whē he comforted vs in our troubles: remouing by his spirit, the anguish and grief of our hearts, & restoring vs to our wanted ioyes in him again. Of which voyce of the spirit, Dauid speaketh whē he prayeth, *Make me heare ioy and gladnesse.* And a. aine, *Restore me to the ioye of thy saluation, and establish mee with thy free spirit.* For this worke the spirit is called *the Comforter.*

Psal. 51.8.

12.

Nowe wee come to the last point: which is the principal thing which yee demaund: and that is, Howe wee shall discerne this Testimonic of the Lords spirit, from the testimonie of our owne spirit. And this is to bee done, eyther in the time of peace, or trouble: al-

E 4 though.

73 **Gods spirit in vs discerned**
though it is more difficile in pro-
peritie, to distinguish them.

There is two voyces of the spi-
rit, as we have saide, which both
witnesse our Adoption. The first,
when the spirit in vs, speakes to
God.

This testimonie of the spirit, is
discerned three wayes : The first
thing whereby we discerne, it is
the great heavines of heart and
sorrowe which the conscience of
sinne breedeth in vs, whē (as saith
the Prophet) God having poured
upon vs the spirit of grace and cō-
passion, *Wee looke vpon him whom*
we have pearced, and lament for him,
as men mourne for their onely begot-
ten sonne : and are sorrie for him, as
men are for their first begotten childe.
Of this nature was the mourning
of Peter, after his deniall, when (as
sayeth the holy scripture) *he went*
out, and wept bitterlie ; and be-
cause
Zach. 12. 20.

cause this is a sure token of saving grace, therefore they that mourne are compted blessed. This mourning hath alwayes ioyned with it an hunger & thirst for righteousness. For ther can be no true mourning for sinne, where there is no desire of righteousness. And because this is the proper effect of the spirit of grace in all and everie one of those who receyve him. Therefore doeth the Lord by his Prophet declare what shall be the worke of the spirit of grace and compassion in that day whē God shall poure him out vpon his children, sayinge: *Then shall there bee great mourning at Ierusalem: like as the lamentation of a dadrinwoman in the valey of Megiddon, &c.* In which place mourning is attributed to everie familie, to everie state, and everie person, and that apart by them selves, to shewe that it is a

Math. 26

75.

Math. 5.4

Zach. 12.5

110.

com-

74. Gods spirit in vs discerned
common effect wrought by the
spirit in all Gods children, & that
vnfainedly.

The second thing whereby we
discerne this testimonie of the spi-
rit, is the earnest longing with ve-
hement grones and sighes in our
selves for to be with Christ.

Of this voyce of the spirit the
Apostle speaketh, when he sayeth,
Rom.8.23 *Wee also who have the first fruite of
the spirit, even wee sigh in our selves,
waysing for the adoption.* And in an
other place to the same effect hee
sayeth, *That wee sigh, desiring to bee
clothed vpon with our houſe which is
from heaven.* For certainly, the na-
turall disposition of a man, can ne-
ver bring forth this stronge desire
of heaven, neither yet could the
renewed heart, beeing yet burde-
ned with infirmitie and love of
this life, have so strong a desire of
removing from it, of it selfe, if the
2.Cor.5.2 *spirit*

spirit did not worke it : and therefore the Apostle attributes these sighes for righteousnes & heaven, to the spirit : and doth shewe vs, that *the spirit* (in these cryes and ^{Rom. 8.26} sighes) *helpeth our infirmities*.

Thirdly, this testimonie of the spirit is discerned, by the confident requestes and petitions it maketh to God in vs, in the full assurance of faith, without doubting: when with boldnes , wee drawe neare vnto the Throne of grace, crying vpon God, *Abba Father*: and in ^{Phil. 4.6.} *all things making our petitions manifest to God*, as sayeth the Apostle. For this confident boldnes of the heart, towardes God, still accompanied with reverence and feare, can not be in the heart, except the spirit did worke it. For the boldnes of a blind heart, wanteth both assurance of Gods love, and reverence of his maiestie.

But

But leaving this, wee come to the discerning of the other voyce, which more properly is called the testimonie of the spirit: speciallie in that place to the Romans. And that is, when God in vs, speaketh by his spirit vnto vs.

This testimonie is to be discer ned, from the testimonie of our hearie, three manner of wayes. First, in our first beleevinge. Se condly, after wee have beleeeved. Thidly, in the eclipses of our faith, and in our troubles.

In our first beleeving, wee may discerne the testimonie of Gods spirit, from our owne, touchinge our Adoption: because our first beleeving, is ever by the testimonie of the spirit, and not by the testimonie of our owne heart. For our heart can never beare witnes to vs, that wee are the sonnes of God, vntill first our heartes have beleeeved,

from our owne spirit.

¶

beleeved, that wee are his sonnes, and this our hearts can not do, except the spirit, have first wrought this faith, by the worde, in our hearts. Therefore, my first beliefe and assurance of my Adoption, is always the testimonie of the spirit of God, and my owne hearts testimonie, must still followe vpon this: so that in mans hearte, the voyce that makeith it first cōcryve Gods love, and beleeve it, is the spirits testimonie: which, when the heart of man hath receyved, then it speaketh. For till it beleeve, it can not speake: according as it is written: *I have believed, and Psal. 116. therefore I have spoken.* Thus then 10. is this testimonie first discerned: 2. Cor. 4. when I discerne, the voyce of the 13. spirit, which I beleeve, from the voyce of my spirit, now beleving, and bearing witnes to me, of that, which first, the spirit of God did wit-

98 *Gods spirit in vs discerned*
witnes to it.

Secondlie, after we have beleev-
ed, wee may also discerne the re-
stimonie of Gods spirit, from the
testimonie of our owne spirit, by
a plaine contrarie order. For in
the former, the spirites testimonie
did goe before, the testimonie of
our spirit: but heere, it followeth
after it: and is the confirmation of
it. So that, when after wee have
beleeeved the spirit, speakeinge the
word vnto vs, and after that belee-
ving, wee have spoken with our
owne spirit: if then wee heare a
new voyce, cōfirming that which
we beleeeved, and which our spi-
rit did speake: that cōfirming, sea-
ling, and stablishing voyce, is the
testimonie of Gods spirit. Thus
wee must learne to discerne, be-
twixt our beleeving, and the con-
firmation of our belief: and so shal
wee know, the testimonie of Gods
spirit,

spirit, from the testimonie of our owne spirit. Therefore still the holie Scriptures of God, distinguish betwixt the worke of God, in making vs receyve the testimonie of his spirit, and his worke, in confirming in vs, that testimonie nowe receyved. And also teacheth vs, to knowe the testimonie of our own spirit (which commeth in betwixt these two) to bee different, from them both. Accordinge to this working of God, the Saints pray, *Establish O God, that which thou hast wrought in vs.* Psal.68.21

To speake more plainly of this point, there is a three folde voyce in the heart that hath the testimonie of Iesus confirmed in it. The first is the voyce of God by his spirit in the worde speaking vnto our hearts, and perswading them to beleieve that the promise belongeth vnto vs.

The

10. *Gods spirit in vs discerned*

The second voyce is the voyce of our hearts receyving the word wherby it speaketh that which the spirit hath perswaded, and this in effect is nothing but the very faith of the heart now actually working in vs. Whereas the first was the worke of the spirit working this faith in vs : so that in this first act we are patients, in the other we are agentes: in the first we are spoken too by the spirit of God, in the seconde, our owne heartes speaketh in vs. The third voice is the voyce of Gods spirit following the voyce of our hearts ratifying it : and this is nothing els but the confirmation of our faith . So wee may see that the Lord perfometh twoo workes in vs for our comfort: the first is, the working of faith & beliefe: the other is the confirmation of the faith, which he him selfe did work. But before his last work, our

Our hearts having faith wrought
in them, doe worke by it, or wee
with our hearts worke: and this is
nothing but beleeving with the
heart, or the hearts beleevinge.
Whercvpon followeth the sealing
of vs in that which it beleeveth,
that is, in the testimonie which
the beleeving heart giveth of him
in whom it is.

Thirdlie, we discerne this testi-
monie of the spirit, in our trouble:
when we find any cōfort, or peace
wrought in our hearts, when they
are troubled: or anie ioye, vpon
the assurance of Gods love. If wee
 finde a quiet calmnesse of minde,
with patience, meeknes, and re-
joycing in tribulation, vpon anie
sight or knowledge of our Adop-
tion: all these are the vndoubted
testimonies of the spirit: who
shedding abtoad the love of God

Heb. 10.

Act. 5.41.

13 God spirit in vs discerned
in our hearts, maketh vs to reioyce
in affliction: as the Apost. speaketh
of the Hebrues, and ye suffered with
gladnes the spoyle of your goods,
knowing in your selves that yee have
in heaven a better, and an enduring
substance. And touching the Apo-
stles, it is saide, They departed reioy-
cing that they were compred worthie
to suffer for his Name. That this ioy,
is the work of the spirit, vpon the
testimonic of Gods love, is mani-
fest by the Apost. to the Romans,
where shewing the cause, why we
reioyce in afflictions, sayth, Because
of the love of God which is shed ab-
road in our heartes, by the holy spirit
which is given vs. According to
this grounde it is, that the Saints
are brought in, wayting what God
will speake to them in trouble: as
namely in the Psalme 85. vers. 8.
I will hearken what the Lord will say.

com-

concerning mee: for bee shall speake peace vnto his people, and to his saints. And the Prophet Habacuk in like manner is brought in saying thus: *I will stande upon my watch, and see vpon the Towre, and will looke and see what bee will say vnto mee.*

Thus whē God speaketh peace to the Sainets in affliction, and quieteth their thoughts, and maketh them heare ioye and gladnes, that is the testimonie of the spirit of the Lord, who is our onely Comforter. For as sayeth the Prophet David, *My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart.*

Psal. 73.
25.

And therefore Moses prayeth: *O satisfie vs with thy mercie, so shall wee reioyce and be glad all our dayes, comfort vs againe, &c.* We may hold it for a most certaine trueth, that our patient enduring of grievous trialls ioyfully, the constant peace

Psal. 90.
14.15.

F 2 of

84. Gods spirit in vs discerned
of God in our hearts, in the tyme
when wee endure the enimitie of
the world: the cosolations, where-
with we are comforted, in all our
afflictions, are vndoubted testimo-
nies of our Adoption, proceeding
all from Gods spirit.

But all this is most cleerlie dis-
cerned, when the testimonie of
Gods spirit, and the testimonie of
our spirit, are seperatethe one frō
the other: & when they are found
to speake one against the other:
and to give two contrarie testimo-
nies. For while these two goe to-
gether, and are not severed or dis-
agreeing: it is oft tymes hard to
discerne the one from the other.
But if we can finde them seperat,
so that the one faile vs, and the o-
ther vphold vs, then may they
cleerly bee discerned. And this
commeth to passe, eyther when
God

God vpon the carnall presumpti-
on of our hearts, suffereth vs to
fall in some dangerous triall. or
then, when God him selfe see-
meth to become our enemie: so
that the heart hath to wrestle
with G O D him selfe, vnder the
sense of his wrath, all former fee-
ling of his mercie then ceasing.

¶ Of the first, wee have example
in Peter, whose heart saide vnto
him, that no danger could make
him forfake Christ the Lorde, to
make him know, that this was not
the testimonie of Gods spirit: but
a carnall confidence of his owne
heart, suffered him to be tried, and
in the triall to fall: and so to finde,
it was but his owne carnall heart,
that did beare witnes to him. God
oft tymes for this cause tryeth his
owne childdren: to make them
discerne, betwixt the confidence

and assurance which their owne hearts giveth them, and that confidence and comfort which the spirit of God worketh in them: that they may not trust in themselves, or in their owne hearts, but in the living God. This the Apostle witnesseth to the Corinthians, **2 Cor. i. 9**, saying: *He maketh vs to receyve the sentence of death in our selves, because we shold not trust in our selves but in God which raiseth the dead.*

Of the second, wee have example in *David* and in *Job*. And this discerning of the spirits testimo-
nie is two folde, one is by the voyce of the spirit in vs, vnto God, when our hearts speake the con-
trarie. The other is, by the voyce of the spirit vnto vs, whē our own hearts saith otherwayes.

Of the first *David* is an exam-
ple: who in his prosperitie saide,

he

hee should never bee moved : Yet psal. 31. 5.
when God did hyde his face, his
heart fayled him: and he saide in
his haste, *I am cast out of thy sight.*
and yet hee presently addeth these
wordes: *neverthelesse thou beardeſt*
the wayce of my prayer. Here wee
may perceyve Davids owne heart,
saying, hee was cast out of Gods
sight : but yet the spirit of GOD,
maketh request vnto God for him,
and maketh him pray to God in
faith, as not reicced of God : and
the Lord did heare him. This him
ſelfe sheweth plainlie, in an other
place, when he sayeth: *I beleevēd,*
and therefore I ſpake : but I was fore
troubled, I ſaide in my haste, All men
are liers. At this time, David com-
passed with the snares of death, &
holden by the grieſes of the grave,
finding trouble and heavines, de-
clares the estate of his owne heart:

F 4 that

82. *Gods spirit in vs discerned*

that it said, that all men are liers: and therefore he gathers this conclusion, that albeit his owne heart did say, that Gods promise should not bee accomplished: yet doubtlesse he behoved to have faith: because he prayed. For except hee had beleeved, he had not spoken. And what can bee more cleere, to let vs see, Gods spirit bearing witnessse, that God hath not forsaken vs, when our owne hearts say the contrarie. Then when by witnes sing this, the spirit causeth vs, against the distrust of our owne hearts, to pray to God: evē above hope, yet vnder hope, trusting in the Lord, as did Abraham. If we examine our selves, what hath bene the estate of our hearts, in the like (or at least in our greatest temptations) wee shall finde, that many tymes, when our harts hath spo-

spoken no comfort vnto vs: yet the spirit of God, hath drawen sighes and cries to God, out of our hearts: which also our God hath heard most graciously. These cries are testimonies of the spirit, witnessing to vs, that wee are the sonnes of God: when as they proceed from vs, our hearts saying the contrarie.

Of the second kinde of the spirits voyce, in speaking from God vnto vs: wee have likewise example in *David*, when his owne heart said vnto God, *Wby hast thou forgotten me?* Behold an other voyce speakinge vnto his heart in that same tyme, *Why art thou vexed O my soule, and why art thou so disquieted within mee? O put thy trust in God, for I will yet give him thankes, he is my helpe and my God.* Heere the heart speaking no comfort, but being

50 **God's spirit in vs discouered**
being wholly discouraged, and cast
downe : the spirit of God in that
same heart, speaketh to the heart,
and comforteth it, with this, that
God was his God. Nowe, that
these consolations are the worke
and testimonie of Gods spirit, it
appeareth by that reason, which
David giveth, when hee boasteth
in strong cōfidence, that although
hee should walke through the va-
ley of the shadowe of death, yet
would hee feare none evill, say-
ing : *For thou art with mee, thy rod
and thy staffe they comfort mee.* By
these wordes declaring, that the
experiēce he had of the comfort,
which Gods spirit did minister vñ-
to him, in his most desperate trou-
bles past, even then when his
owne spirit did faile him, was the
ground of al his cōfidence against
all future trialls.

Psal.33.

Wc

Wee have an example also of this in *Job*. Who when his owne heart reasoned, that God had hid his face from him, and taken him for his enemie: yet hee saith, *Although bee slaye mee, yet will I trust in him, bee shalbe my salvation.* Heere two different specces in one heart: the one from the spirit of *Job*: the other from the spirit of the Lord in *Job*. The one, perswading that God was his salvation, when the other saide, God had hid his face from him.

Thus if wee would cheerlie differne, the testimonie of Gods spirit, from the testimonie of our owne spirit, let vs beholde our selues, when God tryeth vs, rather then when he maketh our moun-taine to stande stronge. or when hee doeth wrestle with vs him-selfe, as he did with Jacob: and in

sco.

192 *Gods spirit is no diſtainer*
ſeeminge to fight againſt vs, yet
doeth ſustaine vs, by his owne
ſtrength in vs, when our ſtrength
faileth vs.

Thus I have as diſtinctlie as I
could, and therefore ſomewhat
more largelie, then an epiftle per-
haps requireth, given you ſuch ſa-
tisfaction to your queſtion, as it
hath pleased the Lorde to grant
me light. If you finde any com-
fort thereby, you ſhall thank God
for it: And what is wanting in it,
for your full ſatisfaction in this
matter, the Lord ſhall ſupplie it by
his owne ſpirit: or by that ſuffici-
encie of grace, which hee hath gi-
ven vnto others his ſervants, who
hee shall raife vp to write more ful-
lie of this matter: for the edifi-
cation of his Saints, in this and all o-
ther thinges, I pray the Lord to
give

give you and vs all, his everlasting
peace throught Christ I E S V S
our Saviour, reveyling more and
more the mysterie of godlinesse
in your hearts, and makinge you
abound in all knowledge with
faith, feeling, and ioy of the holy
Ghost. The grace of the
Lord I E S V S bee with
you, and all the
Brethren,

A M E N.

Io. Forbes.

